

I must close now. . . . As a 31 year Navy and Marine Corp veteran I wish to leave you with a saying that we, in the service of our country, always thought was strictly a nautical blessing. . . . In point of fact, it is a universal phrase of good luck as one departs on a voyage in life. . . . It reads: "Let me square the yards . . . while we may . . . and make a fair wind of it homeward". I wish you all in this audience "Fair Winds and Following Seas". . . . God speed to you and St. Mikes . . . and thank you for listening . . .

#### TRIBUTE TO KEVIN PEARCE

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, Vermont athletes are no strangers to the U.S. Winter Olympic team. In 2009, the Hartland, VT, raised Kevin Pearce was readying himself to be a member of that team when tragedy struck. During a routine half-pipe training session for the 2010 Olympics, Kevin suffered a traumatic brain injury and was nearly killed when he crashed and struck his head. Since then, Kevin, with the support of his family, has worked to recover and heal from that terrible accident. I have heard firsthand from Kevin how instrumental his younger brother David was in providing positive feedback and encouragement as he completed his physical therapy. Together with his older brother, Adam, Kevin started the Love Your Brain Foundation, which offers support to survivors of traumatic brain injuries, their families, and their caregivers.

The Love Your Brain Foundation recently held its free annual retreat in Lincoln, VT. The foundation's mission extends beyond simply providing support to survivors; it also works to raise broader public awareness about the condition. Kevin, Adam, and those who support the mission of the Love Your Brain Foundation believe that traditional treatment options, as well as alternative methods of care, can help survivors of traumatic brain injuries lead full and healthy lives. The foundation's annual retreat enables people from around the country, and some from Canada, who are dealing with traumatic brain injuries to share their own personal stories and to sharpen skills in workshops focused on music, yoga, and nutrition education.

Whether the result of sporting accidents or from a vehicle crash, injuries sustained on the hiking trail or the battlefield, there is still much to be learned about traumatic brain injuries and how best to help those who sustain them recover. That is why the work of the Love Your Brain Foundation makes a real difference.

Kevin Pearce's life forever changed the day of his accident. He and his family have taken that tragedy and turned it into an opportunity to advance public awareness. His story is one we can all be inspired by, and his road to recovery is one we should all from and seek to emulate.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a May 28 article written by Vermont Associated Press reporter Lisa Rathke, entitled "Injured snowboarder helps brain injury survivors," be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Associated Press, May 28, 2016]

#### INJURED SNOWBOARDER HELPS BRAIN INJURY SURVIVORS

(By Lisa Rathke)

LINCOLN—A near-fatal halfpipe crash while training for the 2010 Olympics ended Kevin Pearce's snowboarding career and changed his life forever. Six years later, Pearce, 28, continues to cope with his traumatic brain injury that he will carry with him for the rest of his life and he's helping other survivors do the same.

Pearce, who grew up in Vermont, and his brother started the Love Your Brain Foundation to support traumatic brain injury survivors and caregivers. The foundation provides workshops for yoga teachers to cater their classes to brain injury survivors. It also offers a free yearly retreat for those with traumatic brain injury and their caregivers that is taking place this week in Lincoln, Vermont, and hopes to offer retreats in other parts of the country.

The foundation raises money to cover these activities and is working on educating young athletes about the importance of "loving their brains" and preventing concussions.

About 50 people from around the country and Canada are attending the third annual event that also features nutrition education, art, music and other mindfulness activities. Attendees can also share their personal stories.

"There was a huge missing piece to traumatic brain injuries and there's such an unknown for so many people of what to do after they sustain this injury," said Pearce, following a morning yoga class at the retreat in a barnlike building on a hillside.

Alternatives such as acupuncture, yoga and meditation are proving helpful to traumatic brain injury survivors in their recoveries, said Dr. Roger Knakal, medical director of physical medicine and rehabilitation and the University of Vermont Medical Center.

One of the hardest parts about traumatic brain injuries is that they are invisible injuries, said Pearce's brother Adam.

The biggest eye-opener was how isolated people can become from a brain injury, he said. "When you have a brain injury, you feel so not normal," said Pearce. "You're thrown back into the regular world. You're expected to be as you were before this. We're not able to do that because we're now a new person."

Pearce was considered, along with Shaun White, to be one of America's top athletes in the sport at the time of his crash. On New Year's Eve in 2009, he struck his head during half-pipe training in Utah. He was in critical care for a month and then acute care for two weeks before moving to a rehabilitation center in Denver. He had to relearn how to walk, talk, even swallow. The family then moved back to Vermont where he continued rehab.

Pearce, who now lives in Bend, Oregon, continues to do cognitive therapy and is seeing eye therapists in Chicago to help with vision problems. He maintains a busy schedule, speaking to various groups about his story and the importance of "loving your brain" and showing the 2013 documentary about him called "Crash Reel."

Ari Havusha, 20, of Vancouver, returned to the retreat for the third time this year. He said he suffered several severe concussions and an eye injury as a teen soccer player and another severe concussion later during a college fall. He lives with a constant headache.

Havusha withdrew from McGill University in Montreal and returned home, where he became anxious and depressed. His mother pointed to the Love Your Brain retreat and right away, Havusha said, he knew he had to do it. "It was a huge turning point for me,"

he said. "I saw other people and their traumatic stories and I was able to connect with other people. Suddenly I was kind of lifted out of that isolation I felt so heavily."

#### TRIBUTE TO ADMIRAL BILL GORTNEY

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I honor an exceptional leader and aviator. After 39 years, a lifetime of service to our Nation, ADM Bill Gortney is retiring from the U.S. Navy. On this occasion, I find it fitting to recognize Admiral Gortney's many accomplishments and years of uniformed service to our Nation.

As the son of a U.S. Navy captain and WWII aviator, Admiral Gortney was no stranger to the challenges and opportunities of naval aviation. After graduating from Elon College with a bachelor of arts in history and political science, he entered the Aviation Officer Candidate School and commissioned in the U.S. Naval Reserve in 1977. He earned his wings of gold as a naval aviator following his graduation from the jet strike pilot training pipeline in 1978. He is a 1996 graduate of Naval War College and earned his master of arts in international security affairs.

Admiral Gortney moved through the ranks quickly, moving from commander to four-star admiral in 8 years. Despite his rapid ascent through the command naval ranks, Admiral Gortney still managed to log over 5,360 mishap-free flight hours and completed over 1,265 carrier-arrested landings primarily in the A-7E Corsair II and the F/A-18 Hornet. Admiral Gortney has completed seven tours of command, starting with the VFA-15 Vallions and culminating with his third commanding tour in U.S. Central Command, as commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command / U.S. 5th Fleet, where he provided support to maritime security operations and combat operations for Operations Enduring Freedom And Iraqi Freedom.

Admiral Gortney's first flag tour was as the deputy chief of staff for Global Force Management and Joint Operation, U.S. Fleet Forces Command in Norfolk. This was followed by assignment as Commander, Carrier Strike Group 10 onboard the USS *Harry S Truman*, during which time he was promoted to a two-star rear admiral. After promotion to his third star, he was assigned as Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/U.S. 5th Fleet/Combined Maritime Forces, Bahrain. He also served as director, joint staff, from 2010-2012. In 2012, he became Commander, U.S. Fleet Forces Command. His final assignment prior to retirement was that of Commander, North American Aerospace Defense Command and U.S. Northern Command. It is the first and only position that places a single military commander in charge of the protection of